

## REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action mailed February 3, 2003. Claims 1-34 are pending, and claims 1-34 are rejected.

### Claim Rejections

Claims 1, 15-19, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Morris in combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,105,066 to Hayes ("Hayes"). Claim 1 has been amended to positively recite the limitations that the agent manager registers an agent upon instantiation, receives requests from clients to establish a communication link with the agent, authenticates the client, and passes connection information to an authenticated client to enable the client to establish a direct communication connection with the agent. This claim amendment is supported at least by the specification at page 13, line 12 through page 15, line 6. These features are neither shown nor suggested in the cited references. Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 1, as amended, is allowable.

Dependent claims 2-31 depend ultimately from independent claim 1, and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claims 32-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Morris in combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,360,362 to Fichtner ("Fichtner") and U.S. Patent No. 6,438,643 to Ohara, et al. (Ohara). Claim 34 has been amended to positively method limitations analogous to the amendments to claim 1, which are neither disclosed nor suggested by Morris, alone or in combination with Fichtner or Ohara. Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 34, as amended, is allowable.

Dependent claims 32-34 depend from independent claim 32, and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

### Conclusion

In view of the above, claims 1-34 are believed to be allowable and the case in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this case, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Although no fee is believed due for this filing, any fee associated with this transmittal may be charged to Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

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